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**BULLETIN OF THE  
TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.**  
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May 1998

Editor Andrew Walsh

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The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc. encourages the study of natural history and supports conservation. We issue our journal *The Tasmanian Naturalist* annually in October. People with a range of backgrounds and knowledge are welcome as members.

Contact Genevieve Gates (03 6227 8638) for further information, or write to GPO Box 68A Hobart 7001. Bulletin or website articles to Andrew Walsh (146 Misty Hill Rd. Mountain River 7109, 03 62 664543).

## PROGRAM

General meetings start at 7:45pm on the first Thursday of the month in the Life Sciences Building at the University of Tasmania. Outings are usually held the following weekend, meeting at 10am outside the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery entrance, Macquarie St. *If you are planning to attend an outing but not the meeting prior, check as to the timing of the excursion as sometimes unforeseen changes occur.*

7<sup>th</sup> May Roy Swain-University of Tasmania. **Reptiles.**

10<sup>th</sup> <sup>May</sup> ~~Feb~~ (Sun) A walk through the Myrtle Forest, Collinsvale.

4<sup>th</sup> Jun Susan Gunter-The Environmental Defenders Office (Tas) Inc. **Planning, the Environment and the Law.**

6<sup>th</sup> Jun (Sat) Orielton Lagoon. An exploration of the northern end of this lagoon to look at the Lemon Beauty Head flower, *Calocephalus citrinus*, and also see some birds with Priscilla Park.

2<sup>nd</sup> Jul Stuart Nicoll (Assoc. Prof of Physiology) and Neils Andersen. **Echidnas.**

5<sup>th</sup> Jul (Sun) Waverley Flora Park, Bellerive. An investigation of the colonisation of the park by both flora and fauna some six months after the bushfire swept through.

## 1998 Committee

The following people were elected as committee members for 1998 at the AGM in March;

Kevin Bonham (President), Genevieve Gates (Vice President), Julia Scott (Secretary), John Reid (Treasurer), Amanda Thomson (Walks + Talks), Andrew Walsh (Bulletin Editor), Rob Taylor (Naturalist Editor), Jim Paterson (General Committee), Janet Fenton (General Committee), Len Cusack (General Committee)

## Other Activities

The Tasmanian Marine Naturalists Association have provided a list of activities for the next 3 months.

General meetings held at 7:30 pm in the Brownlow Room at Hampden Rd Community Centre Battery Point Hobart.

Wed 13<sup>th</sup> May David Hanson-DELM Ranger. Wildlife rescue.

Mon 8<sup>th</sup> Jun (Public holiday) Excursion; Meet 9:00am at Eaglehawk dive centre. Dive with Gary Myors to look for seadragons in areas at Eaglehawk not usually dived.

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Jun Gary Myors-TMNA project Officer for Dragonsearch. Audio-visual presentation on seadragons.

Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Jul Mike Sugden-Senior science teacher Hobart College. Changes of a reef from day to night.

Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Jul 4pm Tinderbox excursion. Mike will lead a night dive on Tinderbox artificial reef.

## A letter from the Colliers

Dear Fieldnats,

this is a thank you all for the excellent print you sent for our leaving present. We have put it in a frame and it is now in our hallway as a reminder of our time with TFNC. Sorry we could not be with you for our last meeting.

Our move has gone fairly well and we have now bought a house in one of the outer suburbs of Canberra. It is a lovely spot which adjoins a small reserve. There are lots of birds which we can watch from our private garden. A small group of Sulphur Crested Cockatoos seem to be semi-resident here and quite noisy at times. The garden needs a few more natives but we given up the time-consuming process of growing vegies. They are not as good as from the shops.

We haven't been able get to any field nats meetings yet but we went to the bird club (C.O.G.). There were 80 or 90 people- we thought that we were in the wrong place! Canberra is excellent for bird watching and lots of other things. I am sure we will enjoy our time here for a few years while we turn into (early) grey nomads!

Good luck for 1998 and thanks for your good wishes.

Sue & Phil.

## Outing Reports

by Andrew Walsh

7<sup>th</sup> Feb, Cape Deslacs & Shearwaters

This field trip was organised to coincide with a Parks & Wildlife presentation over the summer period. Located at the Clifton Beach Cape Deslacs Nature Reserve, we observed Short-tailed Shearwaters (*Puffinus tenuirostris*), or Mutton Birds, come into land at their burrows at dusk after a day foraging at sea. Around 5pm that night a pretty fierce rainstorm hit Hobart, no doubt discouraging many members from attending. Those (brave) few who did (around 8 people, plus members of the public) were treated to a marvellous nature display.

As the sun set into the clearing and flaming sky, way off to the west shards of lighting flashed across the sky. Irene Skira from Parks & Wildlife gave a short talk on the biology and migratory

habits of Shearwaters before venturing into a burrow to bring out a young chick show us all. Around 8pm as twilight fell upon us, the first of the Shearwaters appeared over the bay. Then began what Irene described as "a very good night!" as hundreds of the birds began to circle around the viewing platform centimetres above our heads, and land at their burrows. A couple of Brushed-tailed possums were seen moving around between the burrows, and these are known to be a source of mortality amongst the chicks. As darkness fell and the full moon rose more Shearwaters arrived and the air became full of the smell and noises of hungry, feeding chicks.

5<sup>th</sup> Apr, Warra.

This trip was led by Rob Taylor and we visited the forests down past Geeveston. Here we first began with a trundle around the Huon Pine Walk near the Tahune Forest Reserve, where many fungi were seen. Next we move onto the Long Term Ecological Monitoring site in the Warra block where Forestry Tasmania is conducting a long term study looking at ecologically sustainable forestry. We visited a coupe that had been partially logged, leaving some trees behind as a seed source for the regenerating forest. We then visited a Forestry Tasmania employee Bill Brown who was conducting a mammal survey of a nearby forest. All Bill had caught when we arrived were a couple of Swamp Rats (*Rattus lutreolus*) which we were able to get a close look at before he marked and released them. We then journeyed further along the road where we took an hour walk through a superb old-growth forest with many ferns and rainforest species. A five minute video of the field trip will be present at the May meeting.

## 1998 Members

As promised in the last bulletin, I have attached a list of members of our club for 1998. The purpose is to allow a better communication network amongst the members. To protect ourselves from marketers, it wont be posted on our Internet web site-Andrew Walsh.